

To the Seattle Urban Forestry Commission, Wildlife Subcommittee
From: Richard Ellison, 8003 28th Ave NE, Seattle, WA 98115
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Thank you for meeting with us last week. While the meeting was useful, not all topics were able to be discussed. I would like to add some references and thoughts to your activities.

1. References on the loss of Seattle's native bird species diversity and number is correlated with loss of Seattle's tree canopy (**Avian responses to a gradient of urbanization in Seattle, Washington / UW Phd thesis by Stephen Thomas Penland, 1984**).

Loss of native conifers at the UW Arboretum is another example of this (1991 Boersma, P.D. and *K.N. Almasi. Can birds tell the difference between native and introduced conifers in the Arboretum? **Washington Park Arboretum Bulletin** 54: 3, 7-9.).

2. How can we further assess the cumulative impact of habitat loss for the last 25 years, and into the future? What about the proposed loss of native trees in the UW Arboretum with their planned exhibits?

3. How can we better protect the WA State Bird Species of Concern or Candidate Species known to exist in Seattle? What of other species that nest and roost in native trees? Cavity nesting birds like the Piliated Woodpecker should allow for large DBH trees to be preserved, alive or as retained snags. This protection would allow other cavity nesters to also improve.

4. Signage to educate the public should accompany some preserved trees.

5. Regarding impacts to salmon, how to quantify non-point pollution runoff increases from tree removal on a watershed basis. Supporting a tree retention storm water refund/impervious surface tax.

6. Needs to survey for and protect amphibian population remnants. Example: Interlaken Park salamanders.

7. Coordination with other jurisdictions and within the City: WDOT, Corps of Engineers, UW, public and private schools and colleges.

Examples of problems and needs:

WDOT: Heavy with invasive vegetation in trees along highways including steep slope areas.

Corps of Engineers: large canal trees trees being removed for "improvements"

UW: official tree policies ignored: Husky stadium parking, New Law school (see below).

Private schools: Seattle Prep HS, Seattle Hebrew Academy – heavy with invasives.

Public schools : Ingraham HS proposal to remove a large grove of trees resulting in litigation.

City of Seattle "Orphaned" steep slopes : Highway 99, Lake City Way heavy with invasives.

DPD- variances: Give aways: exceptional tree removals, grove removals

Seattle City Light: overpruning, tree removal controversies

Seattle Parks: Promises of snag preservation by Seattle Parks (Mark Mead) in Interlaken Park when a group of 40" DBH cottonwoods were removed but no retention.

1) **Examples of losses of SEPA substantial trees and groves of trees at UW.**

a) New Law School Buildings:

- i) The biggest American Beech in the city of Seattle
- ii) The biggest Chinese Chestnut in the city of Seattle
- iii) The biggest Himalayan White Pine on the UW campus
- iv) A rare Pindrow Fir
- v) The loss of 24 species of trees, many meeting the minimum guidelines for Exceptional Trees under Seattle's Director's Rule 6-2001.
- vi) A botanist would be hard pressed to find a better parking lot containing such a biodiversity of trees and understory. It could have served as both a teaching tool and an international example of proper environmental stewardship and planning.

b) Rare Variety Crab Apple Collection:

- i) At least 50 crab apple trees have been removed at UW since a 1991 survey found over 210 individuals, including some unique varieties given to the campus. Though some died of natural causes, most were removed to make way for one project or another. Many had been given to the campus from the Arboretum between 1955 and 1962, to make way for construction of SR 520. This sample merely serves as an illustration of the way trees in general are treated on campus.

c) Husky Stadium Parking Lot Reconfiguration + Expansion:

- i) Over 39 mature trees of 10 species were removed without public notice in 2001. The FEIS notes: "... a parking replacement project had an inaccurate survey and was on a fast-track construction schedule... Six of the trees... were to be protected, but grading severed structural roots." This sample also serves as an example of the way trees are managed during construction.

d) Campus Parkway Grove of International Peace Trees, commemorating the Fifth World Forestry Congress, held at UW in 1960. Were removed in a road "improvement."